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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 002909

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [PREL](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: CANADA NUCLEAR "COOPERATION" WITH INDIA:  
SIGNIFICANT, BUT LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

REF: (A) OTTAWA 2768 (B) STATE 166864

Classified By: POL M/C Brian Flora. Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

1.(C) In what is described as a major policy shift for Canada, Foreign Minister Pettigrew announced September 26 that his government is ending Canada's 7-year moratorium on civilian nuclear cooperation with India. Pettigrew made the announcement at a joint press conference with Indian FM Singh in Ottawa, following a meeting of the two Foreign Ministers.

12. (C/NF) In a discussion on September 27, Nuclear Affairs Deputy Director Ron Stansfield told us privately that despite media exaggerations and the verbal fist-pounding of "diehard" nonproliferation activists, the new policy does not engender any "real" commitments. He outlined four key elements of the agreement with India:

- India's positive response to Canada's long-standing (15 years) proposal for nuclear safety collaboration (specifically not/not "cooperation," Stansfield asserted) and agreement by both governments to develop a "mutually beneficial bilateral framework" (Canada had proposed announcing formation of an "experts group," India declined);
- scientific and technical exchanges in the public domain (i.e. principally academic venues; nothing commercially sensitive or subject to NSG controls);
- Canada's willingness to provide nuclear-related dual-use items to Indian civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, in accordance with NSG dual-use guidelines (Stansfield noted that crucial "government-to-government assurances" for such potential exports have yet to be worked out);
- the readiness of both governments to explore further opportunities for development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, consistent with their international commitments (Stansfield noted, but was noncommittal about, prospective USG-led changes at NSG).

13. (C/NF) Stansfield acknowledged that Canada's change in policy was spurred by the USG's own civil nuclear cooperation initiative with India announced July 18. There was a genuine sense within the Canadian government that it was "time to deal with India realistically," he said, and the GOC wanted to offer encouragement to the Indians and welcome their new commitment to nonproliferation. The change was also consistent, Stansfield asserted, with the government's 2005 International Policy Statement and PM Martin's acknowledgment, in New Delhi earlier this year, that India is an important strategic partner for Canada. There had been considerable pressure from the Prime Minister's office in the run-up to the Singh visit, he said, "to be forthcoming with India." While the announcement was warmly received by the industry sector and Canada's influential Indo-Canadian community, Stansfield continued, the government anticipated a political backlash, led by the likes of (former Foreign Minister) Lloyd Axworthy and others who had invested heavily in shaping Canada's nuclear nonproliferation policy, including its stance toward India.

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